OUTLOOKS

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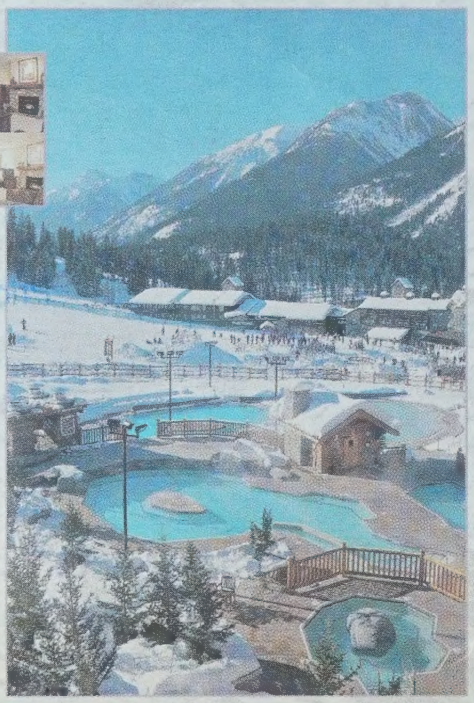

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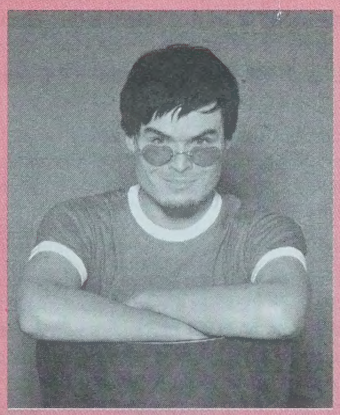
this month in OUTLOOKS

outpost toronto 4
letters 6
editorial 7
out & about vancouver 9
horoscope 14
out & about calgary 15
don't you wish? 17
dear freddy 23
classifieds 26



On The Cover:
Carson shot on location at Urban Sky Studio by David Crosson. Special thanks to Tammy of Details Model and Talent agency for her assistance with the shoot.

what's where

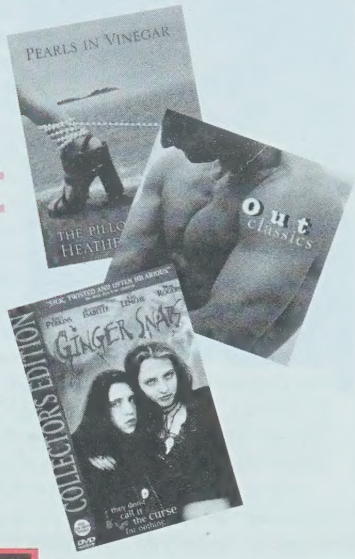
WILDE BILL

In Ottawa, the Wilde About Sappho literary events aren't just about bringing the community together, they're about raising scholarship funds for the Lambda Foundation For Excellence. Dale Smith gets the lowdown on the event from this year's coordinator, Bill Staubi (pictured left with pal David Rimmer, of After Stonewall bookstore).

throughout

CABIN FEVER CURES

Weather-wise it's been one of the wackiest Canadian winters in a long time—so that's why we've hauled out the Interior Distractions, some of our contributors' top picks for warding off the cold weather blues.



CURLING *ROCKS*!

It's a sport where you can drink, smoke and the players yell "hard" on a regular basis—what could be a more perfect way for gays and lesbians to keep active in the winter months?! Peter Carlyle-Gordge reports on the runaway success of Winnipeg's Keystone Rainbow Curling League.

February 2005

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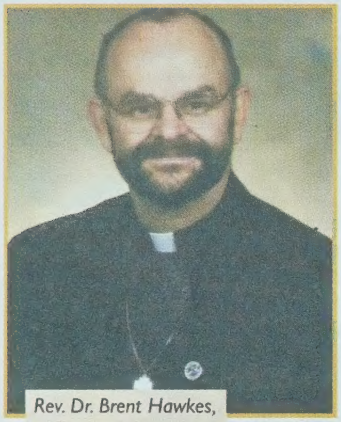
Hawkes-eye view

By Outloks Staff

In 1968, the Metropolitan Community Church was established in Los Angeles as a ministry to the gay and lesbian community; now, 240 branches exist in twenty countries around the world, attracting a mix of both homo- and heterosexual worshippers. Rev. Dr. Brent Hawkes is the pastor of MCC Toronto, the second-largest congregation on the globe with a weekly attendance of approximately 600. As our country's foremost gay Christian, Hawkes has been kept busy as a key player in the battle for legalizing same-sex marriage on a national scale—a battle that he feels we are in danger of losing. *Outlooks* caught up with him recently to discuss this issue and find out just why he and the MCC feel gays and lesbians have a place in Christianity.



Rev. Dr. Brent Hawkes, of Toronto's Metropolitan Community Church

Outlooks: As a gay man of the cloth, what came first—the rainbow or the cross?

Hawkes: I've been involved in church life since I was three years old. My mom was Catholic and my father was old-fashioned Pentecostal. A woman neighbour was Baptist and she asked if she could take me to Sunday school and they thought that was a good compromise between being Catholic and Pentecostal! So I started at three and became heavily involved in the church, so I have to say that I was in the church before I knew I was gay—although I knew I was gay when I was eight or nine years old. I knew that I was different; I jokingly say that when I used to dream of cowboys and Indians I was *really* dreaming about cowboys and Indians! [Laughs]

Outlooks: So despite what is perceived as inherent homophobia in Christianity you think gays and lesbians do have a place in the religion?

Hawkes: Absolutely. We believe that it *is* possible to be gay and Christian; we believe that the Bible does not condemn adult, loving homosexual relationships anywhere. And I think that would be the majority sentiment of most mainline scholars today; I think they would say that the eight biblical texts that supposedly deal with homosexuality have been misinterpretations, that when it was translated into English in the 1500s they really didn't know the difference between homosexuality and pedophilia. Also, in some of the other scriptures, some homosexual things are condemned but so are their heterosexual counterparts in other places.

Outlooks: For example?

Hawkes: Well, homosexual *lust* as opposed to love—and that's not condemning *sex*. The biblical definition of lust is uncontrolled sexual desire, as opposed to sexual attraction. Homosexual rape as well as heterosexual rape are both condemned, but nowhere are loving homosexual relationships condemned. What we've been saying is that many, *many* gay and lesbian people go through this really schizophrenic experience of "I'll be gay but not Christian" or "I'll be Christian but not gay" and back and forth and back and forth. The ex-gay movement really feeds on this—very inappropriately—by saying that people can give up their homosexuality. And maybe there *are* people who are in the middle—they're bisexual—and they may be able to decide to give up their homosexuality and live as heterosexuals. But for most of us, if we're predominantly gay, it's not possible for us to give up our sexual orientation without doing a lot of damage to ourselves.

Outlooks: There has been a fair bit of debate recently in the pages of this magazine about whether or not "legitimate" churches really do hold a place for gays and lesbians—although who's to say how legitimacy is conferred? Isn't it really more the "splinter" factions that welcome members of our community into their midst?

Hawkes: [Laughs] Well, *we* certainly think the MCC is a legitimate faith, and also the United church—again, quite legitimate—is welcoming gays and lesbians. If you look at different traditions, the Christian tradition has the most gay-positive branch within the full breadth of what Christianity is. In Jewish tradition, the reform rabbis have been more gay-positive but the conservative and orthodox ones are not. And in the Muslim tradition, it's almost universally negative, partly because it has been taken over so overwhelmingly by fundamentalists—which is also happening with Christianity. The fundamentalist movement is growing rapidly while moderate and liberal churches are dying. In the United States, thirty-seven percent of the population identifies as evangelical Christians; in Canada, it's seven percent

Outlooks: That's creepy.

Hawkes: What's even more frightening is that the "charismatic Pentecostal" movement has now overtaken Catholicism as the predominant face of Christianity worldwide. They talk about trends in Asia and Africa and South America—it's scary where we're heading in terms of fundamentalist Christians taking over Christianity, the way fundamentalist Muslims have taken over Islam. Fundamentalism is evil—that's a word I don't use very often but it is *evil*.

Outlooks: [Calgary Catholic Bishop] Fred Henry uses that word a lot—he just said we were evil the other day and there was a big uproar!

Hawkes: Well, the more he speaks the better! He just pushes the whole middle ground our way! [Laughs]

Outlooks: Well, he's a media-whore in a white collar; he'll say anything to get on TV or in the newspaper. Speaking of being in the media's eye, you've become quite a key figure in the marriage debate. After all this time, is your resolve still as strong as ever or have you eased off a bit?

Hawkes: Oh, no, no, *no*! We can't ease off *at all*—some people are taking it for granted now that the courts have ruled and the government has said they're going to support legislation; they think it's over. It's not over. The fundamentalists have organized on this issue like they never have before on *any* issue at *any* time. Focus on the Family just announced that they're going to spend another $800,000 on this—and they already spent 1.1 million during the election campaign. Frankly, they're swamping us; they're overwhelming us. I hate to acknowledge that publicly but the gay community has to mobilize. If we lose this then they're going to go after other issues and things that we've won; what's being taught in school and all kinds of other things.

Outlooks: We're still at a crisis point, then?

Hawkes: Yes. A number of the MPs who were going to vote in favour of us or who were wavering are now stampeding to vote against us because of the overwhelming response they've gotten from the well-organized and well-financed religious right.

Outlooks: Are you seeing *any* rays of hope?

Hawkes: Well, I was really pleased with what the prime minister said today while he was in India. The leading Sikh cleric said that Sikhs should oppose same-sex marriage and fight it all the way. When the prime minister was asked about this he said that Sikhs need to remember that this is the same charter of rights and freedoms that will protect them, too. I think that's brilliant. And the eyes of the world are on us on this issue; this has huge implications internationally.

Outlooks: As someone on the front lines, what was your impression of the Supreme Court justices?

Hawkes: I was very encouraged by the questions the judges were asking—most of us were not surprised by the positive answers that came out. I think they "got" the issues. The charter has certainly established itself as a key document in Canada that has a lot of legal clout. If you see this as a charter issue, then it's very clear.

Outlooks: Say we do secure same-sex marriage, what then is the next frontier for us?

Hawkes: I can say—and I think blacks and women and many others would agree—that equality in law is just one step in the journey. Women's salaries are still below men's; there was a report today in the *Toronto Star* about how, in North America, blacks still fall way behind in terms of the education process, in terms of jobs, in terms of positions on boards and corporations and stuff like that. Beyond getting equality in law, which is the first step, there's a lot of education that's got to be done. Canada is a very international country and Toronto is said to be the most international city in the world—we have a responsibility to reach out to gays and lesbians around the world. Last week I got an e-mail from a twenty-six-year-old gay geologist in Pakistan describing what life is like for a gay person there and in neighbouring Iran. We take *so* much for granted here in Canada. This is a twofold issue: one is the ongoing education that's going to need to happen in Canada—particularly with immigrant communities, because many immigrants are coming to Canada from countries where there has not been the dialogue or education. I'm cautious to use this phrase but we have to be careful not to import hate. People need to come out to their families and relatives and co-workers because that is still most effective tool in terms of changing society. So we've got to do the internal work in Canada and we have to take some international responsibility for helping change the circumstances in other countries ▼

Crisis point

Publisher's note: Given the importance of our struggle for equality in Canada, I opted out of writing my column this month in order that we may bring this matter to your attention. Please read the following news release—and the letter which inspired it—and act accordingly; this is our last chance to stem the tide against us at a crucial time in the GLBT community's history.

–Roy Heale

CANADIANS FOR EQUAL MARRIAGE ACTION ALERT

Opponents of equality for lesbian and gay people are making a desperate last-ditch attempt to stop equality, and they know they face their last chance to roll back the clock on equal marriage. They know the vote in Parliament is closer than many people think.

We need your help. We have to match the determined, well-funded efforts of those who want to deny lesbian and gay relationships equal treatment under the law. Our opponents are getting desperate—they know they must stop the impending legislation if they can move on to their next goal: a comprehensive same-sex marriage ban in Canada. Go to **http://www.equal-marriage.ca/donate.php** to help us match their efforts. We have the opportunity to settle this issue once and for all. But we can only win this fight with your help.

As you'll see from the e-mail below, opponents of equality are mobilizing for an unprecedented referendum on whether lesbian and gay people should be excluded from the protection of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Other groups are signing people up to join political parties so they can take over riding associations. Much of the activity is being undertaken by the Canadian arms of large, well-financed American organizations.

The message from Toronto's Catholic cardinal underscores the desire of equal-marriage opponents to string this issue out for years to come. He is calling for at least five more years of delay, during which time the Charter of Rights and Freedoms would be suspended for lesbian and gay people and our relationships. We need the resources to send a clear message to MPs: our basic rights have been delayed for decades. It's finally time for action. If the equal marriage legislation loses in Parliament, our opponents will continue with further attempts—even U.S.-style constitutional amendments—to roll back the clock.

In too many communities across the country, Members of Parliament are hearing only one side of the story. It takes money to put up websites, produce materials, organize meetings and hire organizers to be your voice in Ottawa and mobilize supportive voices in key ridings. Please also pass this message on to friends, family and other equal marriage supporters. We are only metres away from the marriage equality finish line. We can't stop now. Please help us reach the end of this race.

Alex Munter, National Co-ordinator

Canadians for Equal Marriage

MASS E-MAIL CIRCULATED BY UNITED FAMILIES CANADA:

Dear Friend:

With a view to equality, the Liberal government plans to introduce legislation next month to legalize same-sex marriage nationwide. They see this as a basic human-rights issue, and nothing Canada can't handle.

But what if they're wrong?

Pro-family groups and cultural experts across the nation and around the world warn that redefining marriage will have profound, far-reaching, and even drastic effects on the family. They say this is a decision that mustn't be rushed through Parliament or foisted upon the people without their consent; that Canada's children will pay a devastating price for it; that future generations of Canadians deserve better.

What if they're right?

Consider this commentary, co-written by two McGill University experts on civilization (one of whom is gay). "*Most people like to consider their society a tolerant one, and this is certainly laudable. But no society could endure if tolerance were taken to its ultimate conclusion: the belief that 'anything goes.' In addition to tolerance—otherwise known as 'love,' 'caring' or 'compassion'—every society must be guided by wisdom. And that requires citizens to be as reasonable as they are tolerant. Canadians should think twice, therefore, before redefining marriage.*" Katherine Young and Paul Nathanson, "The Future of An Experiment" in Divorcing Marriage: Unveiling the Dangers in Canada's New Social Experiment (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004).

These are sobering words. More excerpts from Young and Nathanson's discussion on how same-sex-marriage could hurt children, men, women, singles, society, religious communities, education, and even democracy are available here. If Young, Nathanson, and the multitudes that share their concerns are correct, same-sex marriage must not go ahead without the consent of the people, after exhaustive public debate. There is much, much more at stake than just minority rights!

Why, although the Supreme Court of Canada refused to rule against traditional marriage, is the government rushing ahead with same-sex marriage? Why, when Prime Minister Paul Martin promised a free vote on the issue, is he ordering all thirty-nine Cabinet Ministers and twenty-eight Parliamentary Secretaries to support the same-sex bill, even though some of those government MPs campaigned in defense of traditional marriage?

Why does the debate rage over the rights of adults, despite evidence from Scandinavia that same-sex marriage interferes with the needs of children?

Why, when the latest poll shows supporters and opponents of same-sex marriage almost evenly split, with fully twenty-four percent of Canadian voters undecided, are Canadians being denied a national referendum which would open the doors to full public debate? These are pressing questions. They ought to be answered, along with a multitude of other questions about how redefining marriage could affect our society, our religious freedoms, and especially our children, for generations to come.

Whatever your personal leanings on same-sex marriage may be, we ask that you join us in calling upon Prime Minister Martin to put his legislation on hold, in the absence of a consensus. Pushing ahead with it now, in the present climate, could divide our country and undermine our democracy. Please ask him instead to enable the discussion that must take place by calling a referendum on the issue. If we delay or do nothing, same-sex marriage will soon be entrenched in law, with all its attendant consequences, for good or ill. If even a fraction of the dire results predicted by social scientists and family advocates then come to pass, that could be devastating. Surely the issue deserves sober second thought—for the sake of our kids.

Please urge your Member of Parliament to represent the interests of future generations of Canadians on this issue. And please forward this message to every Canadian on your list who cares about the future we pass on to our children. Thank you for taking action on this critical issue!

Sincerely,

Rebecca Hudson, Defend Marriage Canada Project,

United Families Canada ▼

OUTLOOKS

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LETTERS

Dear Editor,

This is regarding an Outpost Winnipeg article entitled "The rainbow's grey area" that ran in the January 2005 issue of *Outlooks*. I've read and re-read this article with much interest, and yet I am baffled as to how a marriage commissioner could allow "religious convictions" to interfere with the laws of Manitoba. Mr. Kisilowski is just that, a marriage commissioner—not a member of the clergy!

In Saskatchewan, marriage commissioners are appointed by the Department of Justice; with such an appointment, they then become government officials and thus must uphold the "law of the land". I, myself, am a marriage commissioner in Saskatchewan and can say from experience that we are instructed that the ceremonies we conduct are civil and cannot involve any "religious connotations". As a marriage commissioner I enjoy my appointment immensely, performing ceremonies for couples regardless of who they are; as a gay man I look forward to being part of a same-sex ceremony with pride!

Yours truly,

W.Kewley

(via fax)

Dear Sir:

While I understand that the Roman Catholic Church opposes gay marriage and also the Canadian Government's resolve to pass revised legislation, I believe Bishop Henry's opinion is extreme when he attempts to link homosexuality, adultery, prostitution and pornography together as a justification for using the coercive power of the state against homosexuals. Such repressive views stigmatize gays and have resulted in the historical persecution and widespread discrimination of them under civil and criminal sanctions.

With the advent of the Canadian Charter of Rights and a more enlightened social view, most Canadians—and our courts—recognize that the proposed gay marriage legislation does not compel any religious official to perform a marriage they are opposed to on theological grounds. Gay marriages will be performed across Canada by civil marriage officials and only by religious persons from those church denominations that choose to marry same-sex couples, for example, some United and Unitarian churches.

I would oppose the legislation if the churches, temples, etc., were being coerced to perform any marriages. This is not the case.

While the Roman Catholic Church remains opposed to civil divorce and civil gay marriage, our society can respect this very particular religious opinion while maintaining our broader Canadian commitment to values of equality and fairness. These values recognize the civil laws of divorce and gay marriage.

Yours truly,

B. Edy

Calgary

Dear *Outlooks*:

I was recently browsing the headlines of CNN's website when a certain caption caught my attention. "Christians issue gay warning on SpongeBob video," it stated. The article went on to explain how an individual by the name of Nile Rodgers has created a video to the song We are Family featuring cartoon characters such as SpongeBob, Barney, Winnie the Pooh, Bob the Builder, the Rugrats and so on to promote tolerance in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks. This video is to be distributed to classrooms across the United States. One would think that the effort going into the making of this video is a noble cause. Well, apparently, a few of these Christian activist groups—including one by the name of Focus on the Family—thinks that the video was made to serve a concealed purpose. Not only do they proclaim that SpongeBob SquarePants is gay (a conclusion they came to based on his flamboyant character), they proclaim that the video is being used to promote the acceptance of homosexuality.

I finished reading the article in bewilderment. As a twenty-year-old gay male who grew up in a Catholic High School (which taught values essentially the same as those of the Christian activists), I was always under the impression that the church promoted acceptance, or at least tolerance, of those who were of a different gender, race, age, income bracket, religious belief and, yes, even sexual orientation. I think it is absolutely brutal and pathetic that these Christian activist groups would even suggest that SpongeBob SquarePants is a homosexual. I find it even more revolting that these groups are condemning these videos, which were made to promote unity and tolerance in a time where tensions between various groups of people are at their highest, due to the fact that they believe a subliminal message of pro-homosexuality is being used. Must they destroy anything and everything that remotely poses a threat to their faith? As far as I'm concerned, these groups are clawing their fingernails into whatever they can in order to spread their anti-gay beliefs. I believe that it's a representation of their desperation to suppress the positive steps that the gay and lesbian community has gained, especially in the past several years.

Well, guess what? We are making gradual strides, we are making progress in the fight for rights and freedoms, and if you can't deal with it, tough. I personally look forward to a time in the near future when I can sit down with my kids while watching a Saturday morning cartoon, whose main character is a flamboyant, out and proud homosexual.

C.J. Ryan

via e-mail

Valentine's Day
Monday, February 14th

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EDITORIAL

A charity case

By John Coulbourn

For a young gay man just beginning to find the courage to peek outside the closet in which he'd lived most of his life, it was, in the immortal words of the late Princess Di, a "daunting" tale. It was the mid-'70s—and while, for many, mention of that era evokes a kinder, gentler time, on closer inspection one is likely to find that very few of those cruising that particular sea of nostalgia are of the gay persuasion. In short, for us, it was a little piece of purgatory, suspended somewhere between the repressive world portrayed in the film *Kinsey* and the flawed Valhalla we have achieved today.

I was living and working in a small Alberta city and had "made the acquaintance" of another gay man who journeyed often to the bright lights of a big city called Calgary, where, according to rumour, there was actually something that resembled a gay community. And it was on the heels of one of his visits to that exotic world that he told me of attending a party—probably a function of the Imperial Sovreign Court of the Chinook Arch or one of its forebears—where a collection had been taken in support of a telethon that was running on a local TV station.

Then, as now, the gay community had proved generous and, after a considerable amount of money had been collected, a couple of the more extroverted in attendance set off to deliver the money and the best wishes of the gay community to telethon headquarters. Rather than being thrilled with the money and applauding the generosity of Calgary's nascent gay community, officials at the telethon were reportedly less than enthused, however, accepting the money cautiously, even grudgingly, with the caveat that there could be no on-air credit for the donation. "Wow," I remember thinking, "Even our money is tainted." And with that, I retreated back into my closet to reflect.

Time passed.

Much time passed, actually—and while I am, of course, no longer in the closet, the reflection continues, particularly when events like the recent tsunami push their way to the forefront of our consciousness and seem to demand not just all of our compassion but a considerable amount of our cash as well. In responding to events such as these, we react not so much as members of the gay community or the straight, but rather as members of the much larger community of humanity.

At its best, our typically generous reaction within the gay community reflects an heightened awareness, sharpened to a razor's edge by a couple of decades of battling AIDS, that there is no such thing as a straight disaster or a gay one, and that anything that hurts one of us ultimately hurts us all.

Having said that, however, I think that in the gay community our capacity to give should always be tempered by the knowledge that our money might not always be received in the spirit with which it is given.

Too often, within certain charitable organizations, the assumption is that the money they gather, like the tax dollars our friends on the political right wing seem so determined to protect, comes only from the pockets of straight people and should go, therefore, only to assuage the suffering of the same community. And, because the money used in the gay community is no different than the money used in the straight community, who is to say them wrong—unless we make it a point of ensuring that our charitable dollars go to organizations who accept us as a vital part of the rainbow that is mankind.

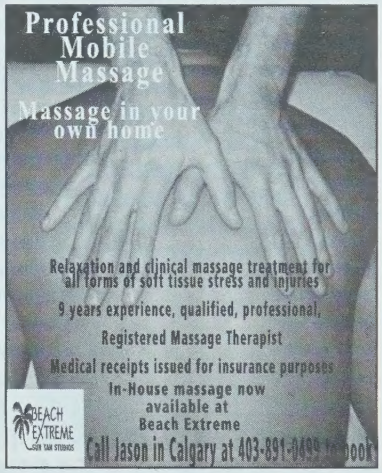
I am not, I hasten to add, advocating that we should write our sexuality on every cheque we write and on every ten-dollar bill we give, nor am I trying to tell anyone how to direct their affairs. Like sexuality, charity, I know, is a very personal thing and is best dictated by one's own conscience.

What I *do* advocate, however, is that before we open our hearts and our wallets, we—each of us in our own way—take the time to find out not only where our money will be going and what it will be doing, but if the organizations we are supporting will be supporting us in return, giving aid to gay as well as straight without judgement. Or are they taking money from the gay community with one outstretched hand while using the other to plug their noses to close out our supposed stench or cover their eyes so that they don't have to see the supposed sinners who dwell in their midst?

I don't expect that we'll change the world by directing our charitable dollars to charities that are gay-positive, at least not in the foreseeable future. But we will have the comfort of knowing that not only is our gay compassion appreciated, our gay charitable dollars are not being used to tell any gay youth anyplace on the face of this earth that his or her life isn't worth as much as that of the straight kid next to him.

Charity may begin at home, but you've gotta watch where it ends up. ▼

John Coulbourn is a native Albertan who lived for many years in Calgary. He now makes his home in Toronto, where he covers performing arts for the Toronto Sun.



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Curling sweeps Winnipeg

By Peter Carlyle-Gordge

John Chabai grew up in a small Manitoba town and began curling when he was in high school. He has always loved the game. When he lived in Calgary from 1994 to 2001, he was delighted to find that the Apollo: Friends In Sports group actually had a curling league for the GLBT community, something Manitoba always lacked, though there are strong GLBT curling groups in Montréal, Toronto, Vancouver and Edmonton.

Last year Chabai, now treasurer of Manitoba's GLBT Keystone Rainbow Curling League, decided that Manitoba—long a breeding ground for top curlers—ought to have a comfortable place for people like himself to meet. "I have curled with straight people, but just feel more comfortable in a GLBT setting," he says. "Besides the time spent curling, it's great to socialize afterwards and make new friends."

Winnipeg curler John Chabai scopes out the ice in preparation for his next move

He found a kindred spirit in Trevor Harris, a young trainee chef who also loves to curl. The two of them organized several meetings to test the waters—or, more accurately, ice. Astonishingly, there was a huge response and the fledgling group now has over ninety regular curlers, including spares.

With four to a team, the league has eighteen teams and meets Sunday afternoons at the Granite Curling Club, starting in October and running through to March 20. In frigid Manitoba, it's a great way to while away a winter's Sunday afternoon and meet lots of new friends.

"We have both men and women and the group ranges in age from around eighteen to maybe seventy," says Chabai, who is sixty-six himself. "The interest in the sport surprised even me and we have been told by the club that next year we can expand to two shifts if the membership keeps growing."

Gio's, the Winnipeg GLBT bar, has even provided a special cup for the team that wins the most times, but Chabai says the league is more about having a good social time and meeting new people outside of the traditional bar scene. The Granite Curling Club does have a bar, however, and most curlers drop in to chat and compare notes once the curling is over.

Nineteen-year-old Trevor Harris is the president of the Keystone Rainbow Curling League, and was also amazed by the response. "It's beyond our wildest dreams," he says. "We thought we would be lucky to get six or eight four-person teams, but ended up with eighteen as well as a dozen spares."

Harris says there are many who have never curled before, as well as a lot who hadn't curled for fifteen or twenty years. He first curled at age eight, and says next year they will likely have two different draw times to accommodate all the extra people. Some expenses are covered by selling 50/50 tickets at each session and they've managed to raise about $500 so far.

League vice-president Doug Pomanski, owner of Winnipeg's Adonis bathhouse, is now thirty-seven and has curled since the age of twelve. "I lived in Calgary for a couple of years and was active in GLBT curling there," he says. "When I moved back here I was determined to get involved again and support a Manitoba group. Response in the first year has been great and I'm certain that next year we'll be running two sessions on Sundays."

He estimates that at least fifty percent of the league's members had never curled before and he's impressed by how many young curlers they've attracted in the first year. Many are so pleased with it that they've introduced their own friends to the sport. And he estimates that at least seventy-five percent stay on to socialize after a game.

"It's a great chance to meet people you would never normally meet in the bar scene or in other GLBT gathering places," he says. "Some great friendships have come out of it."

Pomanski says next year they'll have a bonspiel and be in a position to invite teams from other cities. They hold their own bonspiel in January.

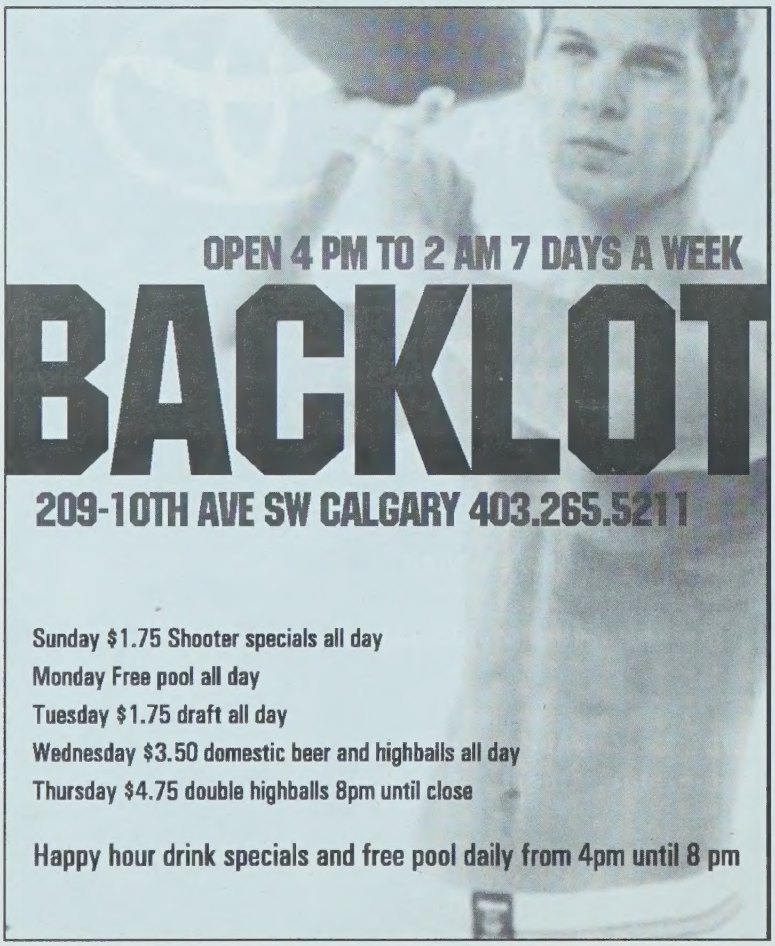
"This year we'll be sending three teams to the Western Cup being held in Calgary March 24 to 27," he says, adding that the annual fee of $100 may rise next year to $125 next year but it's still an amazingly good value.

The league has held clinics for complete novices; the atmosphere is relaxed and friendly, so no one needs to fear they'll look stupid. It isn't about expert competition, more about having a good time.

One attraction is certainly that the sport is fairly inexpensive and relatively easy to learn. The cost works out to just over five dollars a session. The only other costs are the purchase of a broom or brush-between $30 and $50—and some curling shoes, though treasurer Chabai says running shoes are OK provided they have a slider attached to help curlers move down the ice.

Everyone agrees it's a cool new way to socialize and make new friends while getting a little exercise. Anyone interested in the league can e-mail them at: keystonecurling@yahoo.ca. Alternatively, they may call Trevor Harris at (204) 461-0738, or John Chabai at (204) 475-6042. ▼

Peter Carlyle-Gordge is a former Manitoba correspondent for* Maclean's *and* The Financial Post. *He has written for most major magazines and newspapers in Canada as well as broadcasting on the national and international networks of CBC Radio.



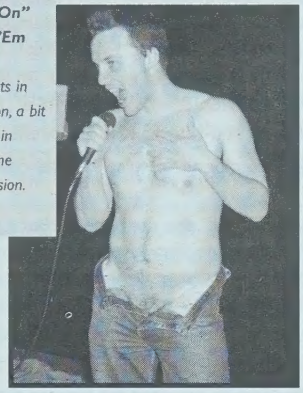
Please note: captions for the January Out & About Winnipeg were not provided by Brent Y, our photographer in that city; they were generated in-house at *Outlooks*' head office

CORRECTION NOTICE

In last month's issue we incorrectly identified the people in the photo at left as past Mr. and Ms Gio's titleholders and indicated in the caption that Gio's had closed its doors. In fact, the club in question was Happenings, and Gio's is still open for business in Winnipeg. We regret any confusion and inconvenience this error may have caused and wish Gio's much continued success in all their business endeavours.

Just Cuz 1st Birthday

I Don't Care—My Keys Are Coming Out Of One End Or The Other!
Paige Turner demonstrates some fine—and practical—moves on Tyler.



Did You Say "Put 'Em On" Or "Take 'Em Off"?
A patron gets in on the action, a bit of 'naughty' in honour of the happy occasion.

On The Plus Side...
We're not certain, but it appears Brent may just wind up crucified on that giant mathematical figure, with a little help from Sin der Rella, of course. To date, the Just Cuz folks have raised more than $4,000 for various charities.

Gay Bingo
THE ODYSSEY

Ball Check
No, Joan-E's not weighing the virtues of regular testicular examination, she's just telling those kooky bingo kids which alpha-numeric combo to look for. Then again, we don't think Joan opposes such things...

We Were Going To Write A Caption About Pussy But Decided It Was To Lowbrow...
Justine models a "spot on" bingo prize. Think Paul Martin's noticed yet that there's a pair missing?

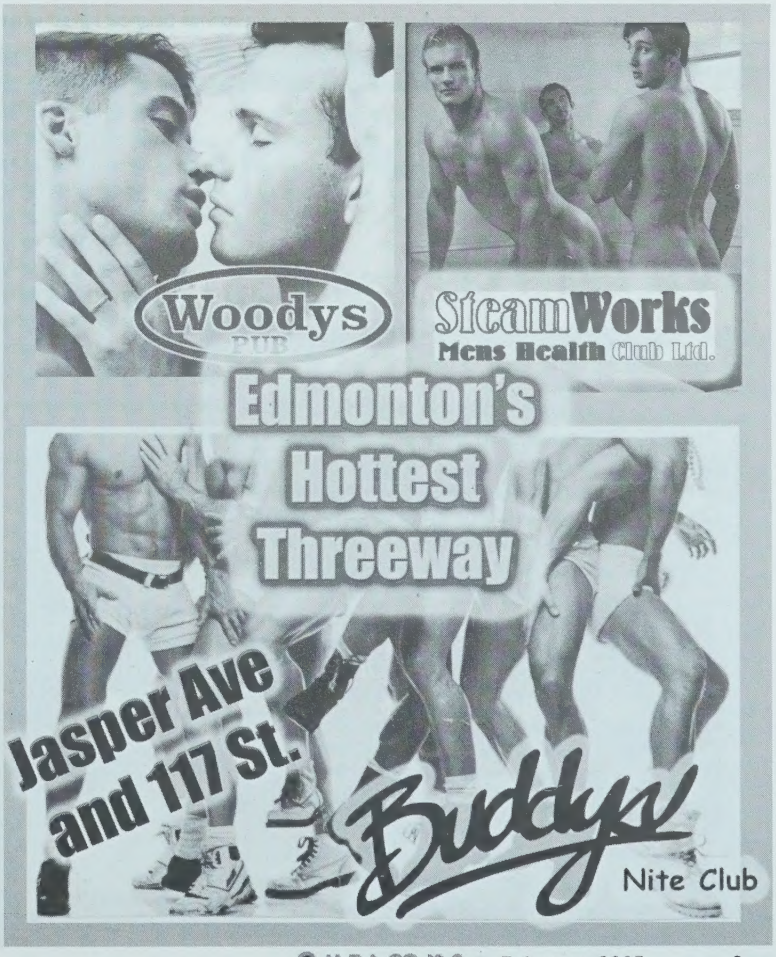
Planning an event in Vancouver? Contact Barry at (604) 685-1377 and he'll see about covering it in Out & About. Photos By: Barry Piersdorff

NDP Fundraiser
BUFFALO CLUB

Beer 'N' Jugs
Perhaps we do have more in common with straight men than we'd care to admit! Here Tim Stevenson is toasting the prospect of a successful campaign with event co-hostess Pussy Willow.

Well, We Can't Sing Ebony And Ivory...
If this were in colour you'd see that Ivana Booking (right) is resplendent in tones of lavender—so she cuddled up to big-hearted diva Sybil Thrasher for a photo-op instead.

I Hate To Interrupt But The Bush Twins Wanna Meet Us For Tequila Shots At The Travel Lodge...
Co-hostesses Ivana Booking and Pussy Willow work the mic for their political pal Tim.



A sobering experience

By David Crosson

I had originally planned to run this column in last month's edition of the magazine; what I thought was a particularly fitting time given that resolutions would have been top-of-mind for most people. However, fate and an advanced deadline (printers take time off at the holidays, too) conspired against me, so here it is. I also now realize that, at that point in time, I would not *technically* have passed the "milestone" that forms the core of this piece, so it's probably better all 'round that I am writing about it now.

December 27th, 2004, officially marked the one-year anniversary of what I propose to be the non-drinking phase of my life. If I am to be held to the fine details of this self-imposed ban on tippling, then I must cop to the fact that it hasn't been an *entirely* booze-free year—although I think few would begrudge me the odd 0.5 O'Doul's or de-alcoholized Holsten that, in large part, helped those around me cope with the fact that I was "taking a break". (It's now starting to dawn on them that I never intended this to be a temporary fix, at least not this time around.)

Truth be told, I would be much happier to report that this had been a year without any indulgence in alcohol whatsoever, although the AIDS-industry concept of "harm reduction" offers some measure of comfort here. To go from behaving like a mad fur trapper (or, perhaps more accurately, Anna Nicole Smith) to less than twelve cumulative ounces of alcohol in the same number of months is no small feat. At least I don't think it is—and this is my column, after all...

Five years ago, particularly in the context of a job that not only accommodated heavy liquor consumption but also almost encouraged it, I was at a stage where I *needed* to quit drinking. Problem was, I didn't *want* to—and so over and over again I made attempts both valiant and vain to curb my boozing, to no avail. Looking back on that period, I can recognize with some degree of satisfaction that there *were* successes: two months here; four months there. But the behaviour patterns remained the same despite these odd triumphs of will.

In the battle between want and need, what it came down to was balance: I liked what I perceived to be the positive aspects of alcohol use far more than I disliked the "negatives" that are inevitably included in the package. So, true to form of many who shared—and continue to share—my problem, I found ways around the issue. Sure-fire hangover cures. Flexible work schedules. Drinking buddies who would offer "encouragement" no matter how ill advised. Clorets.

All that changed at our 2003 Christmas party, an event that started out with me in full "resistance mode", with six weeks history of same under my belt. Looking around the room, I saw everyone having fun—fun that generally included drinking. Ever so gently, I released my grip on willpower and joined in: one, at first; then another, then several more. I was having fun and so were the people around me. We were drinking, talking, laughing, dancing. We were having *fun*. Then, all of a sudden it seemed, my alarm clock was going off—I had a flight to catch. Several ugly, *ugly* hours later I found myself standing in a blindingly bright kitchen, battling a fierce hangover and attempting to make hors d'oeuvres for the fourteen guests expected that evening. I had made a deal with my mother (who was then just coming off round one in a battle with cancer) to organize and host her Christmas Eve party so she could rest up and be "fresh" for socializing. And I blew it.

"You," she said, standing on tip-toes to kiss my forehead, "are a brat."

"I know," I responded, attempting to wrap herbed chevre in smoked salmon without vomiting.

"I'm not going to give you hell," she continued. "But I am going to tell you something I've learned over the years: people who need to stop drinking do it for reasons outside of themselves; people who want to stop drinking do it for reasons on the inside. You have to decide where you're going to find your reasons, dear."

Then she went to lie down. Three days later I decided that the reasons and the resolve to sort myself out were, indeed, inside of me, and so the process began.

In hindsight, putting the brakes on was a lot simpler than I had thought, and the difference between want and need a lot more significant than I ever would have guessed. I realize now that, as drunks go, I was one of the lucky ones: I never kept liquor in the house, I didn't ever drink alone and I didn't crave it as part of some sort of reward cycle. So what it all came down to was avoiding social settings where alcohol was served—period. Over the course of that year, I found that the time I would otherwise have spent either going out or recovering from going out could suddenly filled with all kinds of engaging distractions, all of which proved to beat the previous "hobby" hands down. On Saturday mornings, instead of getting home at 6 a.m. I was getting up at that hour and working on projects around my home; on Sundays I knit feverishly and watched the omnibus edition of *Coronation Street* instead of writhing around in bed with a hangover. Life was brilliant and so was I—or at least I felt a lot closer to brilliance with a clear head and an even clearer conscience.

One thing that was definitely true about my boozy habits was that I never took a drink to prop myself up on sad occasions, only happy ones. I wasn't sure, however, that this would remain true as I stood at the end of a hospital bed on December 10 and watched my mother draw her last breath, just two weeks shy of the one-year "anniversary" of our chat in the kitchen.

It did. I passed the milestone that we both wanted me to pass, and I look forward to celebrating many more.

By the time some (or, perhaps, many) of you read this, you will have abandoned your resolution to lose weight/quit smoking/curb your drinking/try a kicky new hair colour for 2005. Some of you will also likely be feeling guilty about these lapses which have occurred for some reason or other.

Don't.

It's never too late to make—or stick with—adjustments to your lifestyle, *if* you feel they are necessary. And thinking that you have "missed the boat" on making changes just because you've slipped up a bit since the confetti hit the floor is a complete waste of mental energy. Sometimes you need to take more than one run at a hurdle in order to clear it. If you opted out of making a resolution (or resolutions, although multiples do tend to "gang up" on one's resolve) or feel that you have failed before you even really got started, take heart. Take Valentine's heart, more specifically, and use the annual celebration of love to shower little on yourself. Make a fresh start not because you need to, but because you want to. I cannot guarantee success for everyone—or even anyone—but I know that it's a wise place to start. Good luck... ▼

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-Bonnie & Sandra
Steppin' Out

Vancouver Pulse

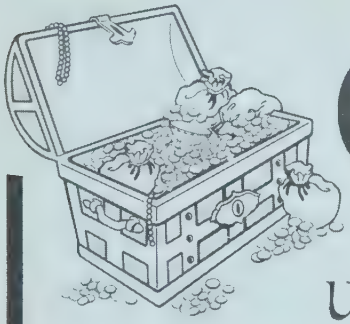
By Outlooks Staff

Webber For The Wave The Imperial Sovereign Court of Surrey and the OIS Rainbow Cultural Society, together with the International Court System are pleased to present a supper and show featuring the music of West End/Broadway king, Andrew Lloyd Webber. The event takes place Saturday, February 5th with both the meal and the show tune extravaganza commencing at 8:30 p.m. Doors open at 8 p.m. Tickets are $12 per person and 90 % of the proceeds will benefit the tsunami relief effort in southeast Asia. For tickets or more information on the venue, e-mail events@gaysurrey.com or call (604) 588-7022.

It's Not All Hay And Heartache Mark Saturday, February 12th on your calendar and "electric slide" on down to the West End Community Centre for CnW Promotions' annual Sweethearts Country & Western Dance. The fun kicks off starting at 9 p.m., with the music and dancing running through midnight—the added benefit being that this is for a very worthwhile cause: A Loving Spoonful. Tickets are $10 and only available in advance through Little Sister's. For those who arrive early, a new line dance will be taught at 9:15 p.m. and then it's a free-for-all 'til the clock strikes twelve. A 50/50 draw for some great prizes will also be included in the festivities. For more information, log on to www3.telus.net/cnwdance or e-mail cnwdance@telus.net.

Golden Oldies—And More! The spring edition of the 21st Century Antiques Fair, a 175-table extravaganza of must-have collectibles runs Sunday, February 20 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Croatian Cultural Centre (3250 Commercial Drive). Parking is free and general admission is only three bucks—how can you lose?! For more info, log on to www.21cpromotions.com or cal (604) 980-3159

To have your community event listed in Pulse, please submit your information by the 15th of the month prior to issue date. E-mail: main@outlooks.ca. Toll-free fax: 1-877-885-6657.



Community Chest

Upcoming Events:

Throughout February

Get out and support "Cuts for Dr. Peter"—$3 from every haircut in February at The Barber Shop (located at 1228 Burrard Street) will be donated to the Dr. Peter Centre. Call (604) 688-7032 for more information.

Monies Raised Last Month:

* Davie Street Shoppers Drug Mart Tree of Life Campaign raised $15,207 for the Dr. Peter Centre
* McCarthy Tetrault Foundation contributed $5,000 to the Dr. Peter Centre
* The Vancouver Foundation raised $1,000 for the Dr. Peter Centre

Thanks to the Vancouver Community for your support!

To pre-promote your fundraiser or to post information on monies raised in the next issue of *Outlooks*, e-mail: main@outlooks.ca or fax your info toll-free to 1-877-885-6657

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OUTLOOKS Q reviews

CD

By David Crosson

Title: In Good Company
Artists: Various
From: Universal Music
Release Date: 2004

I don't ordinarily review movie soundtrack CDs, mainly because they contain selections that have become standbys/crowd-pleasers simply because they appear so often on movie soundtracks. However, when the score for *In Good Company* arrived and I noticed that Stephen Trask was responsible for four of the cuts, I made an exception. For those unfamiliar, Trask is the words-and-music genius behind both the stage production and film of John Cameron Mitchell's *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*—so how could I resist?

True to form, the Trask selections on the CD are superb: moody, complex and just brief enough to leave the listener wanting more. His first track, entitled The Chase (number six on the roster, just to clarify), is a melodic instrumental filled with beautifully played xylophone and guitar. Were it included in a collection of meditation music, I guarantee Nirvana would be reached almost instantaneously. Next up in the Trask treasures is The Arrival, a composition that floats tribal beats out into the cosmos and then wraps up with a bombastic, symphonic flourish. Did I mention it's fabulous? Think "new-new age" without all the crystals and incense, just gorgeous, ambient sound. The final two songs, Accidentals and I'm Psyched, are both pretty in a "legitimate" way and contain the same happy blend of strings and percussion as the other cuts. The second-last song, Accidentals, conjures images of sunshine through trees on a road trip, particularly with the added boost of "bright" up-tempo trumpet.

Though his contributions to the album are a distinct departure from the harder edged *Hedwig*, Trask's work is still remarkably "him" and worthy of investigation. Other great tracks include the Aretha Franklin classic Chain of Fools, maestro David Byrne's Glass, Concrete & Stone, and a fabulous version of Besame Mucho by Canada's own Diana Krall. Overall, *In Good Company* is a great soundtrack, the only exception being Steely Dan's Reelin' In The Years, a prime example of why I almost always avoid reviewing movie scores!

Title: Cardboard Logic
Artist: Andy Northrup
From: New House/Up North
Release Date: 2004

In some twelve years of reviewing music, I've never failed to be impressed by the note-writing skills of Canadian artists—in this instance not just those limited to the framework of a scale. Despite what seems like rapidly encroaching Americanism, our home-grown talent consistently demonstrates that they still know their p's and q's when it comes to getting their work out. Take, for example, the message sent along with Andy Northrup's recent release *Cardboard Logic*: "Your support on the last disc was so appreciated. I hope you hear the progress that this disc represents for me." Guess what, Andy? I did—and then some.

Much like his often under-appreciated compatriot Jeff Straker, Andy Northrup is one of those Canadian performers who can hold his own as a musician, *sans* hype, synthesizers or "playing the gay card". He is a singer-songwriter before all else, and a good one at that. Northrup himself would be the first to admit that his music is not everyone's cup of tea, particularly if there's any bias in favour of what is usually categorized as "gay material". Judged on its own merit, *Cardboard Logic* is a well-rounded collection of songs that showcase Northrup's strengths to great effect. Whether it's upbeat cuts like the album-opener Sometimes and (Only Trying to) Understand or one of his more reflective ballads like These Hands, this Edmonton-based performer's talent shines through in the most unassuming and "comfortable" kind of way. On this album in particular there is what sounds to be a new fullness to the music, and choices made in the instrumental accompaniment have proven to be good ones. On key songs, Northrup's "fine gravel" voice is subtly accentuated in a very pleasing way by backup singers; on others, he is raw and real, true to the folk roots the drive and inform his music.

Cardboard Logic is also an excellent showcase of Northrup's skills as a lyricist, too. "*But the world is changing faster than you know/I can sense your consternation as it grows/You deny the history of who I am/Taking comfort in the fact that you'll see me damned/To spend eternity in darkness and in fear*" he sings on the track entitled It Ain't Easy. The song ends with the lines "*But though you speak of higher love/It's up to me to rise above/And it ain't easy.*"

Some things in life aren't easy, but when it comes to music, Andy Northrup and his crew really do make it seem like it is. ▼

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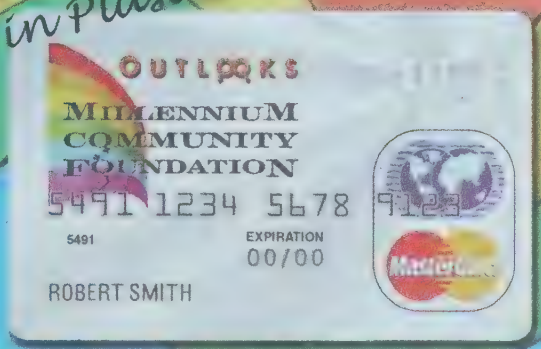

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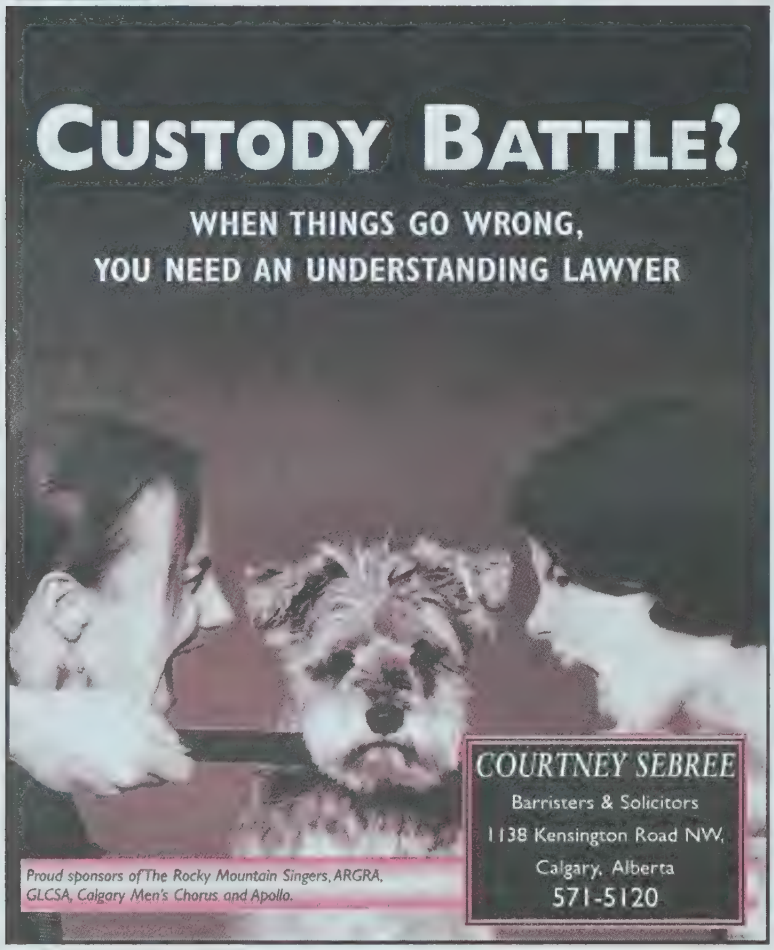
By Sheldon Cooke, Contributing Writer (Calgary)

Recommended Book: I always have a few books on the go—this month, I've been tearing through Diana Gabaldon's *Outlander* series. An Englishwoman on vacation with her husband in the Scottish Highlands, ventures through a stone circle (think Stonehenge on a smaller scale), and ends up transported 200 years into the past, just before the Jacobite uprising. Within days, she's forced to marry a Scottish Highlander for her own protection—and they end up madly in love with each other. It's a great read, especially if you like well researched historical novels. However, the two main characters can barely keep their clothes on…

Recommended TV Show: Not one for bland North American T.V., through a friend I've found an hysterical British series called *The League of Gentlemen*. Imagine *Kids in the Hall* tossed into a blender with *Monty Python*—then add a plotline. *The League* consists of four actors (who play all the myriad parts in this series, both in drag and out) in the fictional town of Royston Vasey, where it's very important to be considered a local… To learn more, visit 'em online at website: (**www.leagueofgentlemen.co.uk**, which features information on the show and video clips.

Recommended CD: the hunky Britpop star Robbie Williams (formerly of the boy band Take That) has always been a favourite of mine, ever since *The Ego Has Landed*. Robbie's sexual orientation has always been in question, and he has a lot of fun making sure that we *keep* questioning! His *Greatest Hits* CD is brand new in stores, and provides listeners old and new with a great retrospective of his solo career. Favourites on this collection include Angels, Rock DJ, Feel and the new single, Radio.



Let's not limit ourselves this February: the planets will deliver *more than* our fair share of valentines. So how can we choose? Go beyond those red-only ones and embrace a rainbow of colours. It may be all Aqueerius independence *now*, but by mid-month the Sun will enter romantic Pisces and love will conquer all!

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

Proud Rams will happily discover that there are a few lovers among their friends this February—who will warm *your* cockles with an early valentine? You may even attract more than a warm handshake around the office after the 7th, so make your assorted moves while your charisma is high. Hurry! Before you know it, the planets will move on and your corporate overdrive will fall back into neutral.

TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

You could make a name for yourself among the glitterati as February gets underway. And what name might that be? It will all depend on a combination of timing, yearning and desirability. So, think about what you really want, keep a keen eye out for opportunity and be ready to demand what is rightfully yours. How brightly will you sparkle, queer Bull? Put it this way: wear sunglasses...

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Bank on February for a Wilde escape that will bring on an assortment of escapades. Pack your bags, pink Twin—your valentines will be far-flung and hidden in all sorts of nice places. There will be one particular heartthrob who'll offer more than one might think. What was once sedate and cool will become hot and zesty after the 7th. Are we talking about a good meal? Perhaps...

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)

It may be wintry February but the temperature is *definitely* rising. Strike a match, feel the heat and enjoy the sizzle—you can attract any valentine you want and yet you may feel too shy to make the first move. Don't let your self-confidence flag, gay Crab; although you may not feel up to meeting and greeting, this is not the time fade into the background.

LEO (JULY 24 - AUGUST 23)

Partnerships will take on an added importance this month, as four planets in Aqueerius will brighten any one-to-one relationship. Proud Lions will thrive with a significant other and will be in a position to make others feel very happy and fulfilled. Return to creative pursuits and expand your artistic horizons, as immense opportunity will serendipitously channel through these efforts. Ommmm.

VIRGO (AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 23)

Work may be much busier than usual but you won't mind; February will offer you ample energy to get the job done efficiently and easily. But, thankfully, life is not all dreary elbow grease, and Queer Virgins can party hearty after the 7th, thanks to Mars. Why not channel a bit of that workaday energy reserve into something fun and totally frivolous… Anyone we know?

LIBRA (SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 23)

Fun will be mandatory and inescapable this February, so start the Valentine's party early and enjoy the happy ruckus through the 19th. But all play and no work can make gay Libras slack, dissipated and out of shape, so get your jollies in early and be sure to take care of responsibilities on the job. As well, be sure to revamp diet and exercise regimes as the month progresses, then enjoy your 'just desserts'.

SCORPIO (OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22)

March to the tune of a different drummer. February will deliver some surprising changes that will change your perspective. Be prepared to do what needs to be done to inspire, convince and reunite. Gather your valentines while you may, 'cause once the dust has settled, you'll be able to truly enjoy yourself and apply your talents to something (or someone) remarkable.

SAGITTARIUS (NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22)

Gay Archers are never shy about asking for what they want—now, you may even get your wish! (May I suggest that you ask for the perfect valentine?) What is it about your family this month that will create discord at home? Try a teaspoon of diplomacy and a ladle of pride. Remember, only *you* are responsible for your own happiness. Others will simply have to adjust...

CAPRICORN (DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 20)

Well-heeled pink Caps could be swept off their feet by the lovely Valentine fog this February. Although they are more fiscally inclined, they'll be tempted to spend their hard-earned dough on a dreamboat—or three! Before you put your anchor down at any old dock, be sure that it is worth the effort; you don't want to be scuttled and used for scrap, *do you?*

AQUARIUS (JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 19)

It will be impossible to pull Aqueerians off centre stage with a hook this February, as they'll be able to command all the attention and will revel in it. Enjoy the roar of the crowd and see which important valentine you can impress. People you meet now will help you financially later in the month, so bank on your considerable charisma and don't mortgage your best assets.

PISCES (FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20)

A Pride parade of planets will offer Guppies a rush of good vibes throughout the month. You'll be able to offer the world a nice combination of intuition and generosity, but don't waste it. Cash in on the good gay karma by volunteering for a good gay cause. (Are there any others?) Friends will try to get in on the act after the 7th; let them get involved while you delegate and then relax...

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Apollo Western Cup Kick-Off Dance

VICTORIA PARK COMMUNITY HALL

Snow Board-ing
Despite the bitter cold, members of Apollo's executive turned out in force to show support for the big Western Cup kick-off dance. They all look surprisingly "sunny" here, don't they?

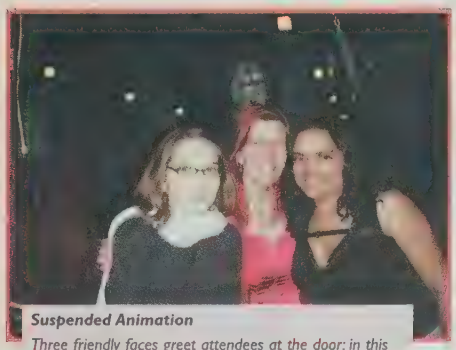
Blessed Creatures
Bartenders (from left) Kevin, Darren and Mel were on hand to help "warm the cockles" of dance attendees with a nip or two from the liquor cabinet. Judging from those smiles, you'd think they'd been sampling their wares!

Snow Big Deal
Dawn and Nicole, of Powder & Pride, man the information table (or is that 'woman the information table'?) for their upcoming gay ski event.

The Pied Piper Of Handbag?!
Sean Alley, of the Choices safer sex project, displays his bountiful (and practical) stash of condoms out on the dancefloor. And here we thought you had to wear a disguise and go to the drugstore to get them...

International Festival of Animated Objects Launch Party

BROKEN CITY



Suspended Animation
Three friendly faces greet attendees at the door; in this case it's CAOS marketing and communications divas Sharon (left) and Sabrina (far right), with IFAO President and curator Xstine P. Cook.

From Reel Time To Real Time
Philip Huber, maestro marionettist from the film Being John Malkovich, *drops in to check out the action at Broken City.*

ARGRA Dance

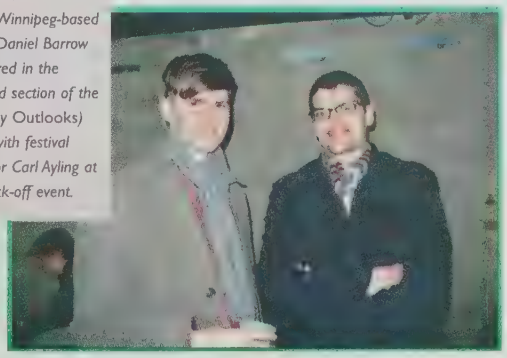
VICTORIA PARK COMMUNITY HALL

We Can Certainly Check More Than Coats
Bernie (left) and David tried their best to take advantage of warm weather mania–and all they wound up with was a pile of coats!

Marty Who?
As if there wasn't enough to entice us, Brad and Rob turned out to "raise awareness" of Different Strokes swim team's annual Mardi Gras party, which takes place March 19.

Staged Presence
Xstine P. Cook welcomes the crowd and thanks the festival sponsors, eager to get rolling on a fabulous week-plus of shows, schmoozing and workshops.

Artful Union
(Left) Winnipeg-based artist Daniel Barrow (featured in the Framed section of the January Outlooks*) visits with festival director Carl Ayling at the kick-off event.*



Buckle Bunnies?
In some ways, Darren (left) and Chad defy description—here they're doing their best to look like "two nice young men".

Planning an event in Calgary?
Contact Cap at (403) 228-1157 and he'll see about covering it in Out & About.
Photos By: Outlooks Staff

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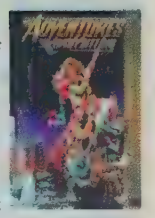
INTERIOR

By Josh Murray, Contributing Writer (Vancouver)

Recommended CD: In a time when even the mediocre hits of Britney Spears warrants a 'best of' collection, I'm thankful for friends who point me in the right direction. Lately, they have me rocking to Wide Mouth Mason. This trio has never quite received the credit they are due, and the album *Rained Out Parade* should have been a classic Canadian rocker. On the flipside, an underrated American performer, Vanessa Williams, has dropped a jazzy love song album—perfect for hunkering down with the mid-winter blues. If Williams steers clear of generic material and focuses on her smooth blend of jazz and sophisticated pop, she'll succeed at keeping my mp3 player stocked.

Recommended Movie: Perhaps it's because of the gloomy weather, but I love a creepy, dark film during the cold, winter months. The Canadian cult classic *Ginger Snaps* has found a permanent place in my collection. It beat the upcoming Kevin Williamson thriller *Cursed* to the punch by bringing to the screen the story of two tormented sisters whose run-in with a werewolf becomes a true nail-biter. And when you're "stranded" by the weather, nothing can beat a great afternoon watching the early Chris Columbus-directed, Elizabeth Shue vehicle *Adventures in Babysitting*.



Recommended Book: The big screen version of *Brokeback Mountain* has been hotly anticipated, mostly for its love scenes between stars Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhaal. The book, originally published as a short story in *The New Yorker*, is engrossing and devastating. Annie Proulx's novella follows the reckless love affair of two American ranch hands. And even if the beautifully depicted imagery and incredible sexual tension don't capture your attention, you'll surely love all the cowboys.

Comfort Food: The greatest import of the season is the Lindt Caramel Crunch bar. Pricey for a chocolate bar but it'll be keeping *me* content this winter.

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DON'T YOU WISH?

This twenty-one-year-old single Cancerian is equally comfortable dancing in a club or at home watching a movie. Matt will be go-go dancing at Altitude 2005 gay ski week—be sure to go up and say 'hi' if you see him there.

Photographed in Vancouver on location at Get Fresh florist on Davie Street by Barry Piersdorff

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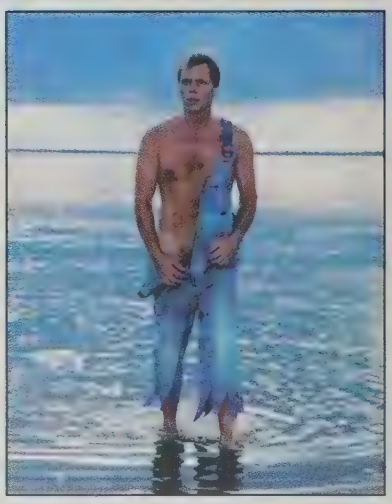

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By David Crosson, Editor

Recommended TV: Whether you nibble at it a bit on weeknights or gorge yourself on the two-hour, four-episode omnibus Sunday mornings, *Coronation Street* can't be beat when it comes to hibernation fare on the tube. Convoluted, comical and oh-so-British, *Corrie* has taken on a (new) life of its own, even after some forty-five years on television. Best of all, the gay intrigue is just starting to crack this side of the pond, with darling Bruno Langley at its core. The best cure for winter blues? "Soap" up and wash your cares away...

Recommended CD: Rammstein's new-ish release *Reise, Reise* has been a constant companion since it fell into my hands mid-December, and represents some of the German industrial band's best work to date. There's a track for every mood or change in the weather, from the tongue-in-cheek Amerika ("We love living in Amerika—Coca-Cola, Wonderbra!") to the aural Sturm und Drang of Stein um Stein, the latter being a perfect accompaniment to menacing winter skies. In a different vein, *Shut Up You F**ing Baby* by comedian and *Arrested Development* star David Cross is great company when the 'blahs' kick into high gear. Nothing for this man is too sacred or too profane, and the resulting concert recording from Atlanta is one you'll want to listen to over and over again. Screamingly funny.

Recommended Book: *Pearls in Vinegar, the Pillow Book of Heather Mallick* is a wonderful way to cheer up on a grey day. The book contains the *Globe* columnist's observations on everything from infidelity and shopping to scars and marzipan, all delivered in that signature Mallick manner. Chopped up into tiny sections (there are 162 in all), *Pearls in Vinegar* is as pleasing as a box of bon bons, but without all the guilt, and a delight to read—and re-read—from start to finish. If you're feeling especially generous, this is a great one to pick up for a down-in-the mouth friend. Highly recommended.

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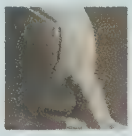

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Building the foundation

By Dale Smith

Every year, Wilde About Sappho is the crowning social event for the Lambda Foundation For Excellence, a group that establishes Canada's only national series of annual university scholarships in gay and lesbian studies. Featured in six cities this year, Wilde About Sappho is Canada's annual celebration of gay and lesbian literature.

"The Wilde About Sappho event is important to the Foundation for a couple of reasons," says Bill Staubi, the coordinator of this year's Ottawa fête. "It's a fundraising event, so obviously some of the money that we receive finds its way back into the scholarship program or it helps to fund some of the other fund raising activities that we do to raise money for the scholarship program. It's also important to the Foundation's work in that gay and lesbian literature is such an important part of our culture, and such an important part of our identity that getting students to be interested in researching other gay and lesbian issues is aided by opportunities to bring people together for a cultural experience."

That the Foundation would be behind such an event seems a natural choice to Staubi. "Wilde About Sappho is consistent with what the scholarships are trying to do, which is advance understanding of gay and lesbian issues, and encouraging people to be active participants in our community, in our culture, in our science," he says. "It's not just an activity to generate some money for the scholarships, but it's also a way of reinforcing our commitment to our own segment of society, our own segment of our culture."

Matthew Fox and Anna Camilleri are just two of the authors who will be featured at Wilde About Sappho 2005. Photo of Anna Camilleri by Kelly Clipperton

Staubi's involvement in the event has increased dramatically this year, after having attended one of the events and helping to organize a dinner during Pride Week. "I had been on the Lambda board for a very short period of time, and that was how I got interested in Wilde About Sappho," he explains. "This year, Gary Sealy—a long-time organizer for Wilde About Sappho—was looking to get involved with some other issues and some other activities with Lambda, and he needed someone to take over for him. He asked me if I would take a hand in organizing primarily the Ottawa event, but also coordinating with the people organizing the events in other cities."

And Staubi has risen to the challenge.

This is the fourteenth year for Wilde About Sappho in Ottawa, with the series starting off in Vancouver on February 17th and 18th, then moving to Ottawa on the 24th and finally wrapping up in Guelph on March 6th. Toronto, Montréal and London are all slated for the fall.

"What people can look forward to in those three events is an exciting array of contemporary Canadian authors, who will read from their work and generally engage the audience with some commentary, some social observation," Staubi says of the first 'leg' of this year's tour. "You'll not just get the author reading their own material, but a bit of a flavour of the author's views on things and some of their ideas. Usually, they talk a little about work that they have in progress and work that they're planning to do in the future, so you have a bit of a glimpse at some things that are coming down the line. And, of course, you get the author's take on some current events."

He points out that, in addition to all that, the events also have a social component built in, either a gala before the reading or an opportunity afterwards to meet the authors. "You can get them to sign books or ask a favourite question that's always been puzzling you," Staubi adds.

He hopes Wilde About Sappho will also provide a new outlet for the community and be more than just a literary event,. "[It] often draws out some folks that you may not see at other community events, so it's a chance to meet some new faces and make some new connections within the community," Staubi enthuses.

So why drag yourself away from the TV on a cold winter night for an evening of literature? "Right now, even though GLBT issues and culture are enjoying a bit of a flirtation with the mainstream, it hasn't been an easy struggle to have this kind of visibility, to get our members of the community into that popular mainstream culture," Staubi says. "And there is still an ongoing fight for acceptance of the diversity within our own community. That freedom, having being hard-won, is still easily lost."

Staubi stresses that coming out to support events like Wilde About Sappho is one way of encouraging the growth and stability of that culture in Canadian society, and that authors only survive if people hear them and know about them.

He also sees the impact of the events reaching a larger scale. When it comes right down to it, assembling several hundred gay and lesbian people—or friends of gay and lesbian people—at a visible and dynamic social event really sends a message about our place in Canadian society. Wilde About Sappho is, for Ottawa, one of the longest-running literary events held at the National Library—and one of the best-attended.

"It presents a view of the gay and lesbian community that's not always reflected in the common understanding about the things that we're interested in," Staubi says. "It's a chance to remind ourselves of the richness of our culture and the tremendous contribution that gay and lesbian people make to the rich culture of Canada. But it's also a way of asserting our presence on the cultural scene, and a way of demonstrating the diversity and dynamism that exists within the gay and lesbian community."

This year the events are also aimed to advance the Foundation's goals by generating interest in more scholarship programs. Currently, Lambda only has scholarships at four universities (Ottawa, Carleton, Manitoba and New Brunswick), with the Université de Montréal becoming the fifth later this year.

"The event in Guelph is designed to stimulate a scholarship there," Staubi says. "And we're talking to about five or six other places with alumni—plus there are some existing scholarships out there that we're looking to create a strategic alliance with, so the next couple of years should be pretty dynamic for the organization."

According to Staubi, there are even conversations going on with a couple of universities on the prairies.

Even still, he feels there is room for growth. "We would really welcome a call or an e-mail from any readers who are members of an alumni association and would like to talk to us about developing a scholarship at their university," he says. "We're certainly looking for other universities to partner with."

With an impressive list of authors (including R.M. Vaughn and Anna Camilleri) hitting all three events, and others like Helen Humphreys, Warren Dunford and Matthew Fox reading at both the Vancouver and Ottawa events, this year's Wilde About Sappho promises to be an event to remember. More information about the Lambda Foundation for Excellence or Wilde About Sappho can be found at www.lambdafoundation.com. ▼

Dale Smith is a freelance writer who lives in Ottawa. His work has previously appeared in XY Magazine, and Outlooks' RSVP competition.

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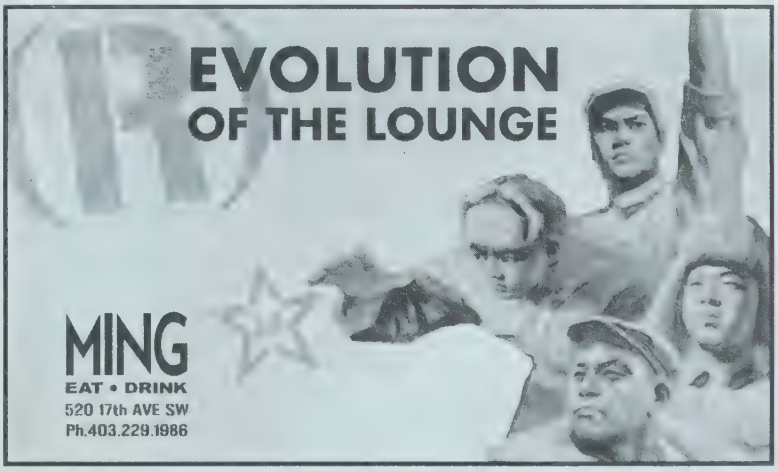

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Vested Interest
Penny Gyokeres, of the Toronto Gay Hockey Association, revs up the bids for a (slightly) modest jock model.

Making A Case For Charity
The hockey association's Ian Dunlop addresses the crowd at the Black Eagle.

Strapped For Cash
We're not quite sure what Penny was saying, but we're fairly certain it wasn't a come-on!

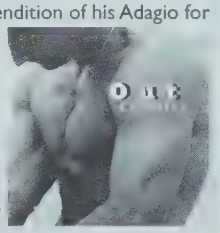
All photos this page by J.R. Anderson

INTERIOR DISTRACTIONS

By Michael Wright, Copy Editor

Recommended TV: Now that PrideVision has gone the way of monster-meat, we can't get our weekly fix of the hilarious and cheeky *So Graham Norton*. However, consolation can be found in savouring the moments viewing episodes of *Six Feet Under*, one of the best TV series to come along in years (*Twin Peaks*, anyone?). If you really find yourself with time on your hands, check out one of the boxed sets that have recently become available through online outlets and music stores everywhere.

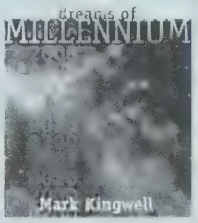
Recommended CD: For pure relaxation and rejuvenation, you can't beat The Choir of New College, Oxford's *Agnus Dei: Music of Inner Harmony*. Including Barber's Agnus Dei, Mozart's Ave Verum Corpus, Fauré's In paradisum (Requiem) as well as the Cantique de Jean Racine, the music is at once exquisite and uplifting—sure to transport you from the harsh reality of winter's chill. Speaking of Barber, a lovely rendition of his Adagio for Strings can be found on the *Out Classics* CD, along with selections from Britten, Bernstein, Tchaikovsky and others. Even if you think you hate classical music, you owe it to yourself to give these a listen.



AGNUS DEI

Recommended Book: My Capricornian realism comes through here: I have read and re-read Mark Kingwell's *Dreams of Millennium: Report from a Culture on the Brink*. Kingwell's sharp-witted and at times acid-tongued observations of the social conditions in North America range, aptly enough, from the Ivy-League to the trailer park. He has few kind thoughts for the smugness of well-off North Americans, many of whom take their cushy lifestyles for granted. A thought-provoking yet hugely entertaining read.

Report from a Culture on the Brink



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Dear FREDDY

Dear Freddy,

I'm a bit confused and I'm wondering if you can help me. While I was out "making the rounds" on New Year's Eve, I met a lot of new people. One of the guys I was introduced to told me that he knew "my type" and later said that I was "one of those art-fags". Huh? I have *no* idea what that means or even if it was an insult or a compliment—can you fill in the blank for me?

Possibly An "Art-fag"

(e-mail submission, geographic origin unknown)

Dear Possibly,

Oh, thank *God*! Pardon my outburst but when people start a letter with an admission that they're 'confused', it usually winds up being something horrific, like a sudden erotic interest in opposite-sex genitalia or an acknowledgment that Stephen Harper is coming across as *less of* a right-wing prick (if it's the latter then your TV's on the fritz...). Here's the deal, Possibly: you *are* an art-fag. How do I know? Because a complete stranger was able to figure that out all by his lonesome in the midst of some tedious Auld Lang Syne chaos. (I hope you were able to discern that he was one of those naughty judgemental-types under the same circumstances—'champagne clairvoyance', if you will.) To help you out in a more user-friendly manner, I have compiled a small list of up-to-date art-fag traits, so you can see just how well/poorly you fit the stereotype. If you are indeed an art-fag, then:

a) The items in your closet look like they would work nicely for costuming another *Addams Family* sequel.

b) You put cigarettes and coffee on your monthly budget under the "food" category.

c) You refer to your bachelor suite (it's in a character building, right?) as either your "studio" or your "space".

d) The television you watch is limited to reruns of HBO series that air on Showcase and the odd early-morning episode of *Power Rangers* (any incarnation) when you're coming down off 'E'.

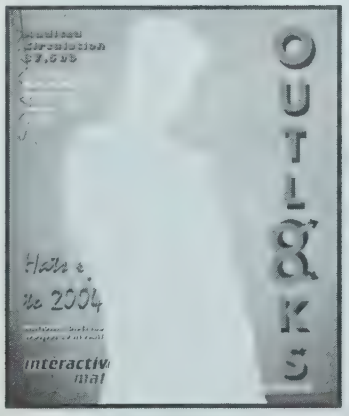
e) You use more hair product than a *hetero*sexual, but less than a *metro*sexual. And you refer to hair product as "hair product".

f) You "save up" and only masturbate once a week to help make it a more mind-blowing (not to mention wad-blowing) experience. This may also mean that you are a chronic procrastinator.

All in all, Definitely (note the name change here), I'd say you're not bad off in the grand scheme of things—although I *do* hate promoting the idea of cultural stereotypes. The important thing is that you are an art-fag, my dear, which is far, *far* better than being, say, a sweater-fag, a circuit queen, a muscle-mary or, heaven forbid, straight!

Much love,

Freddy



Could this be YOU?

***Outlooks* is seeking attractive and outgoing guys for future cover and Don't You Wish features. If you are interested in applying, please e-mail a recent picture of yourself along with stats and contact information to: main@outlooks.ca . Please note: only those whose submissions are of interest will be contacted for further discussion.**

Dear Freddy,

About six months ago, I started exploring an interest I have in the world of latex—and I love it! I met some very cool people and have a lot of fun, and now some of my new friends have invited me to come to a fetish night with them. I'm really excited about being able to interact with other leather and latex people in a larger context, and have even bought a new rubber outfit to wear. I think it looks really great on me, except for one thing: my glasses. I can't see without them but they ruin the "vixen" look that I'm going for—is it OK to be practical in these kinds of settings or should I try to feel my way around the party without them? This is really bugging me.

Val, the "rubber maid"

Dear Val,

Off the bat I'd say you'd do well to feel your way around the party with or without your specs, 'cause it'll help you meet even more new people. However, as far as the outfit goes, I'd say lose them if you can. There's nothing worse than seeing someone decked out in a hot fetish outfit that's been ruined by a pair of crappy Lenscrafter glasses. Actually, even super-chic frames tend to look goofy with leather/rubber gear, so you'd best follow that old bit of wisdom about taking off one accessory item before walking out the door. I'm just a bit curious, though, Val: are you unable to wear contacts? My advice would be to get a pair of those Wild Eyes lenses to wear just for fetish events—try the mirrored ones, 'cause you'll meet tons of new people as they try to adjust their collar/corset/codpiece/etc. in the reflection of your pretty peepers. The other option is to find one of those guys who is into K-9 scenes and use him as a "seeing-eye dog" for the night. Just remember to bring some Scooby snacks and a handful of baggies to pick up the... Well, anyway, have fun.

Lix,

Fred

Write to me, Dears

All letters become property of Outlooks and are subject to editing.
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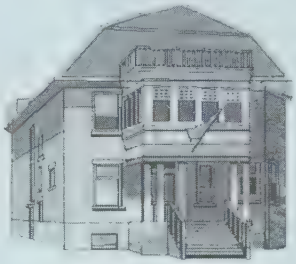

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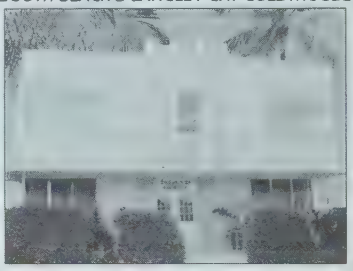

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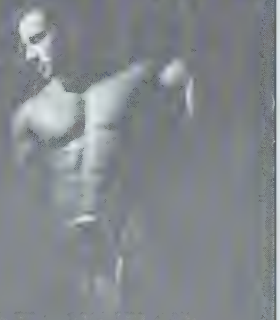

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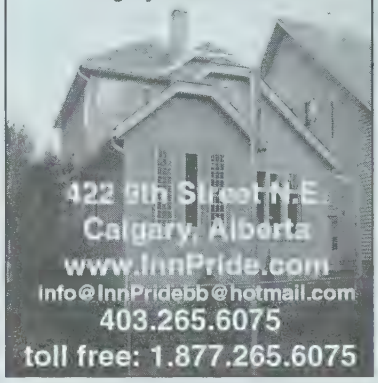

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OUTLOOKS' FEATURE INN

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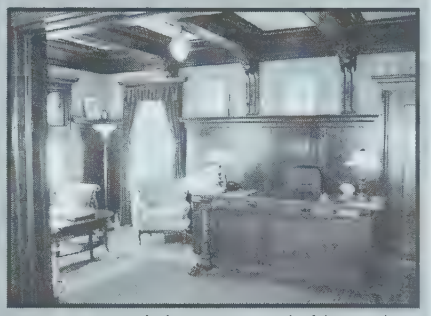

Perfect for either business or leisure travel, the Parker Guest House offers on-site concierge with complimentary fax service, express check-in for repeat guests, conveniently located parking (very important in San Francisco!), private phones with voice mail, courtesy WIFI high-speed Internet access and flexible (complimentary) breakfast hours.

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All guest rooms feature terry cloth robes, down comforters, cable TV, private phone with voicemail and top-of-the-line bath products. Rates include breakfast, wine social, steam room access and use of the extensive public areas and gardens. Although the Parker Guest House caters primarily to gay and lesbian patrons, everyone is welcome to enjoy and experience this unique home-away-from-home. Check in and check it out!

The Parker Guest House Bed and Breakfast is located in San Francisco at 520 Church Street. For more information visit them online at **www.parkerguesthouse.com** or call toll-free at 1-888-520-7275 .

Pictured above right: the front desk of the Parker Guest House Bed and Breakfast. Pictured above left: one of the beautifully appointed guest rooms.

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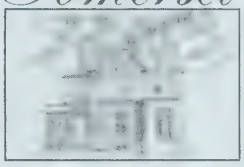

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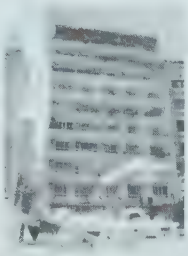

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OUTLOOKS CLASSIFIEDS

Index...

100 - Employment
office 101
domestic 102
trades 103
service industry 104
work wanted 105
help wanted 106
gardening services 107
salespersons wanted 108
retail salesperson 109

200 - Real Estate
homes and condos for sale 201
homes, apartments, and suites for rent 202
shared accommodations 203
accommodations 204
accommodations wanted 205
vacation rentals 206
office space for rent 207
Real Estate Agent 208
Office space wanted 209

300 - For Sale
automobiles 301
home furnishings 302
antiques and artworks 303
computers 304
general and miscellaneous 305
garage sales 306
pets 307

400 - Personals
massage 401
friends 402
models 403
dating services 404
announcements 405
phone lines 406
general 407
health services 408
personal services 409
personal growth 410
Escorts 411
Erotic Body Massage 412
women's services 413

500 - Announcements
birthdays 501
anniversary 502
obituary 503
in memoriam 504
notices 505
general 507
lost & found 508
services 509
weddings 510

600 - Travel
accommodations 601
travel Alberta 602
travel BC 603
camping 604
travel international 605
general 606

700- Business
services 701
business opportunity 702
computer rental 703

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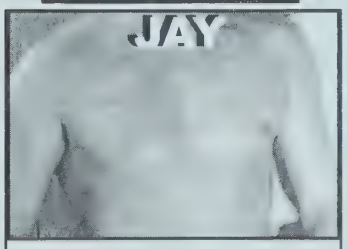

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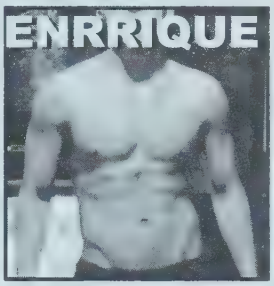

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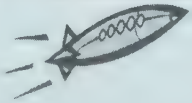

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Board Member:
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Answer:

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Pride Calgary	2850
Rocky Mountain Cruisers Car Club	2027
SHARP Foundation	2830
Speak Sebastian.	2024
Stepping Out	2400
The Verge	2461
AIDS Calgary..	2469
Prime Timers Calgary	2471

CALGARY
Businesses

11 St Lodging	2450
Rainbow Destinations	2042
Money-Pennies	2444
The Calgary Eagle	2451
Conference Centre at Country Gardens.	2441
Enstasy Counselling Services..	2442

EDMONTON
Community Groups

Dignity	2012
GLCCE	2860
Kairos House	2047
Men's Support Group...	2042
Outreach (U of A)	2029
PFLAG	2045
Police Liaison Committee	2038
Prime Timers of Edmonton	2044
The Edmonton Vocal Minority	2053
Curling with pride	2057

EDMONTON
Businesses

Cosmetics by Karen	2525
The Fly Bar...	2520

LETHBRIDGE

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GALA/LA	2014

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By Dale Smith, Contributing Writer Ottawa

Recommended Film: *Lilies*—and not just for Jason Cadieux in a loincloth! It's a brilliant love story with fantastic staging (men play all of the female parts). *Lilies* also stands out, in my opinion, because it's a Canadian film that's actually good!

Recommended CDs: Anastacia's self-titled third album. On it, her Diva Fabulousness weaves a much more raw and personal album this time around and, given the demise of my last relationship, I could listen to the track Sick And Tired for *hours*. If I'm feeling a little more upbeat, the Sugababes' *Three* is always in order. It's a unique blend of pop and garage—just be sure get the UK import version if you want all of the tracks.

Recommended Book: Clive Barker's *Sacrament* remains my all-time favourite book. This is a tale about a gay man revisiting his past, and the mystical man he met who is out to destroy all life in order to face God. With imagery so vivid you can taste the words, Barker weaves a tale of fantasy and metaphysical intrigue that keeps you wanting more.

Recommended Way to Warm Up: A big cup of hot chocolate with a shot of Sambuca!

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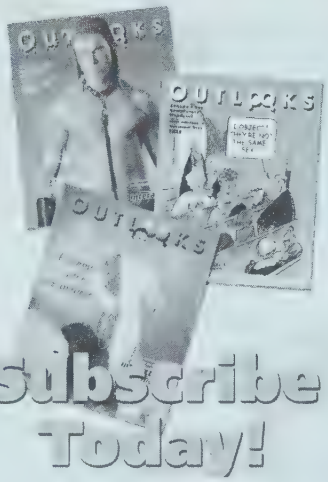

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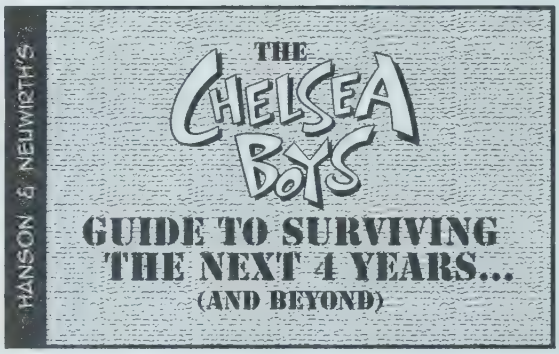

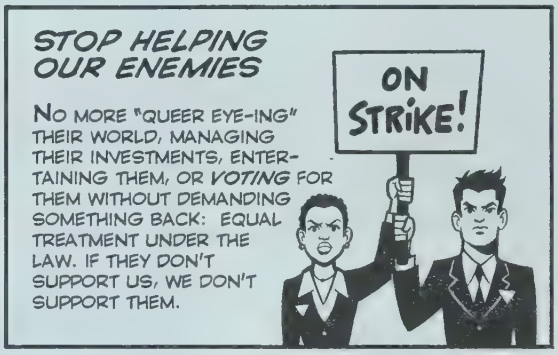

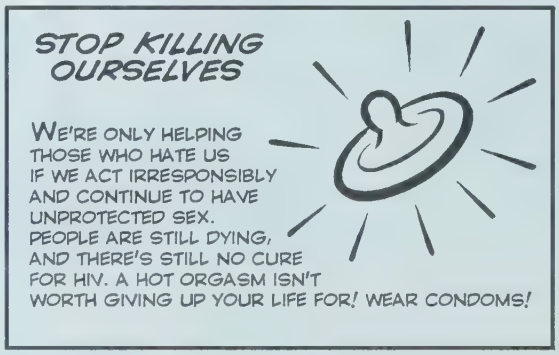

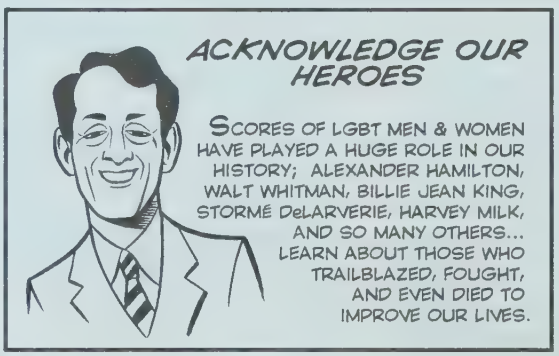

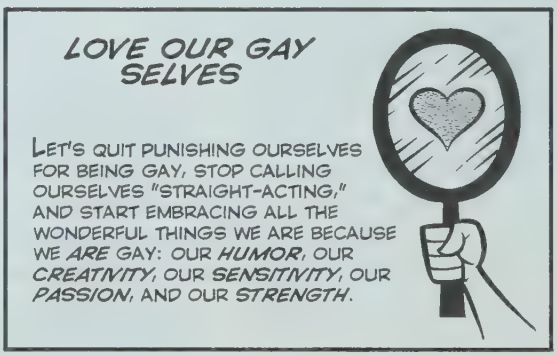

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ARTIST'S STATEMENT

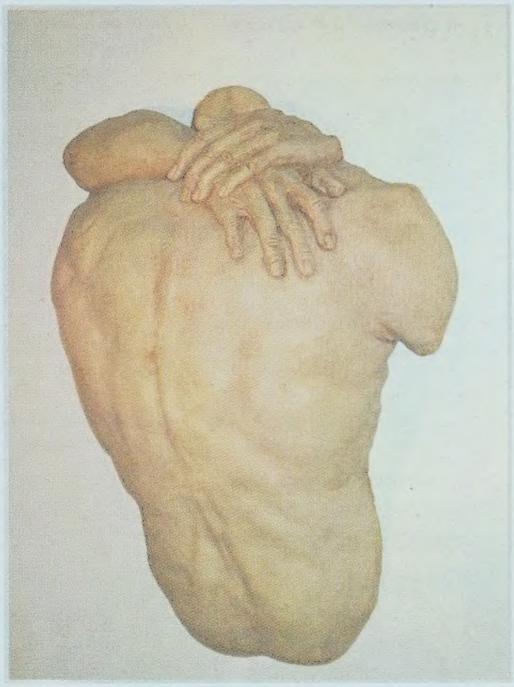
"Clay's nature relates best to small forms and to a great sensitivity in the handling of the surfaces. These qualities attracted me as I'm most interested in the expression of intimate themes such as serenity, acceptance and the gentle communication that can exist between two people. My work celebrates the gentle and romantic side of GLBT2 men and women."

–R. Bruce Flowers, SSC, SCA (Sculptors Society of Canada, Society of Canadian Artists)

Sculptors Society of Canada
La société des sculpteurs du Canada

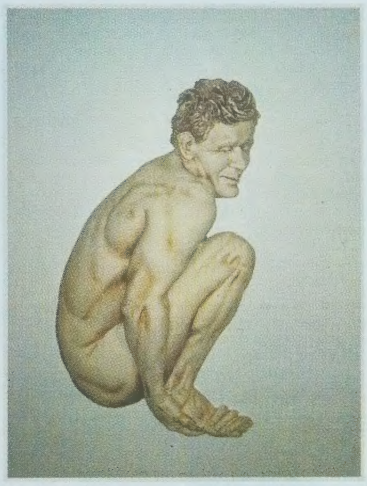
Mr. Flowers will be participating in an exhibit called Clay PRIDE!, which runs May 27th through September 4th, 2005, at the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery (25 Caroline Street, North, Waterloo, ON). For more information on the gallery, visit them, online at **www.canadianclayandglass.ca** . More of his work can be seen at: **www.rbruceflowers.com** E-mail: rbruceflowers@sympatico.ca

Ubi Caritas



Sheltering Wall

Dreaming of You



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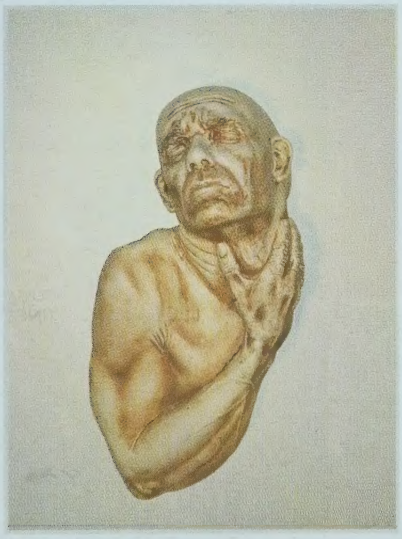
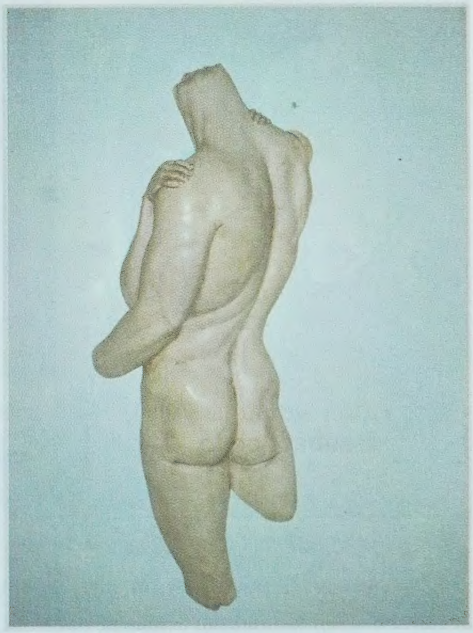


I Remember

Dreaming of Her



Sheltering Wall

Sculpture photos on this page by Mr. Gene Timpany

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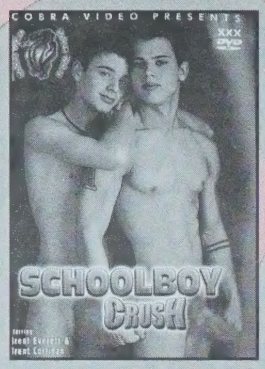
Schoolboy Crush

From: Cobra Video



Featuring: Brent Everett, Brent Corrigan, Chase McKenzie, Shaun Ferarra, Lance Evans, Ryan Watkins, Jeremy Spencer, Benny Argento

Running Time: 120 minutes

February is the month for lovers and romance, so what could be more appropriate than a schoolboy's first crush? (Especially when that crush is happening to the adorable Brent Corrigan as he falls in love with his older brother's best buddy!) This arrow from Cupid is causing Brent to explore some new feelings that just won't go away.

A study session for Brent Everett, Chase and older brother Jeremy is not going well, so the hot young studs decide to go shoot hoops and burn off some energy. However, Jeremy's younger brother, Brent Corrigan, arrives just as they are leaving their apartment. It's obvious that young Brent is interested in older Brent, but the object of his desire is not buying into it—or he's playing hard-to-get around his cool roommates. Brent wants to join the group but Jeremy insists that he stay behind at the apartment. Crushed and unhappy about being alone, Brent fantasizes about a private moment with the older (and very hot) Brent. In his fantasy, it's obvious that he needs a man—and very soon! Even his friends are getting laid at eighteen and Brent feels that it's definitely *his* turn. His good friend Benny was a virgin until he met Sean Ferrera and lost his innocence to the well-hung Latino sex machine. Now *that's* a fantasy that Brent Corrigan would like to live out in reality—particularly with Brent Everett!

Alone in the apartment, Brent is horny and can't stop thinking about the other Brent's hot lips, his lean, muscular body and the tempting bulge in his pants. It's a real surprise when his (literal) dream man returns the apartment to use the bathroom. Our young stud heads for a cold shower just in time to see Brent Everett hang out a huge piece of man meat in the bathroom. Caught in the act of voyeurism, young Brent thinks he'll never get his moment with the subject of his secret longing.

As the story unfolds it becomes clear that these hot frat boys are very gay-friendly and sex is just another part of their daily routine. It only remains to be seen if Cupid can shoot arrows properly and the two Brents become connected. A romance story with a happy ending? Watch and see for yourself if love triumphs in *Schoolboy Crush*.

Review Sponsored by Express Video

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RATING: *OUT OF FIVE POSSIBLE STARS*

MUSIC: ★★★★	*SET:* ★★★★
BODIES: ★★★★★	*STORY:* ★★★★
ACTION SCENES: ★★★★	

Hard As Rock

From: Big Blue Productions Inc.

Featuring: Brad Rock, Jason Hawke, Sean Storm, Jeremy Jordan, Xavier, Bret O'Hara, Scott Gunz

Running Time: 100 minutes

Boxing champion Brad Rock has the perfect body: rippling muscles and ten inches of man meat just waiting to be serviced. It goes without saying that his is an interesting life, and he lives up to his reputation as a stud. Sitting beside the pool, reading a gay XXX magazine, Brad takes a mental journey through highlights of his past experiences from prison, the military and his high school boxing career. As a "straight" man in search of perfect sexual experiences, it's easy to see how other men could figure prominently in his dreams—no matter where Brad wanders he seems to find the perfect bottom boy ready to submit to his huge manhood.

After a quick dip in the pool, Brad decides to soak up some rays on an air mattress. The hot sun on his naked body relaxes him and he begins to think about his past. As he daydreams, he wonders about how the time spent in prison may have changed the direction of his life, particularly when a chance encounter with fellow prisoner Jason Hawke opened his eyes to "alternative" sex. In prison, Brad kept himself in shape by practicing his boxing moves, and Jason saw an opportunity to teach him some *new* moves on the jailhouse bed. Of course, two muscular prisoners together can only lead to one thing...

Still soaking up the sun, Brad reminisces about world-famous body building champion Scott Gunz, who used to come over and use Brad's gym equipment. This perfect bodybuilder's solo-action exhibitions made Brad question what his own sports goals should be in the future! A world champion muscle man working up a sweat is a tempting sight—even for a straight man like Brad!

The next trip down memory lane is from Brad's life in the military. In particular, it's all about a shoeshine that he received from a young private, Jeremy Jordan. It began as an innocent spit-and-polish job but ended with a different kind of "elbow grease". Jeremy knew exactly how to deal with Brad's enormous feet, not to mention every other part of his perfect body. At the time, "don't-ask-don't-tell" was exactly what Brad believed in, although Jeremy probably wanted to brag about his big adventure to the fellow cadets!

Thinking about the school wrestling coach makes Brad realize even competitive sports didn't fill his niche as a "real man"—it was more about hot showers with other athletes and Brad's dominant nature that helped to form his sexual appetites for many years to come. As a 'perfect ten' with rippling muscles and a killer smile, it's easy to see how Brad attracted—and continues to attract—sizzling sexual attention from the men around him throughout his life. *Hard As Rock* is definitely worth a bit of your attention.

Review Sponsored by Priape

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RATING: *OUT OF FIVE POSSIBLE STARS*

MUSIC: ★★★★	*SET:* ★★★★★
BODIES: ★★★★★	*STORY:* ★★★★
ACTION SCENES: ★★★★★	

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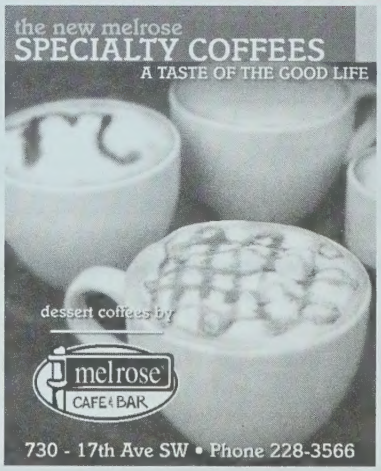

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